

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED DECEMBER 31st. 1947.

To the Chairman and Members of the Education Committee:-

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit to you a report on the School Medical Services operating in this county for the year ending December 31st. 1947.

Before considering any aspect of this year's work, however, one's mind is naturally turned towards the retirement of Dr. Christopher Rolleston after 37 years service devoted to the welfare of the children in this county. His work amongst them will be remembered with real gratitude, and it will be difficult to find a successor with as brilliant a knowledge of Medicine in all its branches.

It must be realised from the start that this year's report has been written almost entirely from the consideration of the figures and notes of my predecessor, and very little from my own personal observations, but this has been inevitable since my appointment dated from November 1st. only. However, as far as possible, the work was continued throughout the year in the same form of routine, and the results have been tabulated accordingly.

ROUTINE INSPECTIONS: The number of children on the registers of the Authority's schools at the end of December was 2,131. Altogether 579 children (Entrants 219, Second age group 269, Third age group 91) were submitted for routine medical inspection, and in addition 204 children were seen at re-inspections and 28 as special cases. These figures are actually considerably below those of 1946, namely, routine inspections 690, re-inspections 253, and special inspections 35, but it is felt that an adequate explanation may be offered as follows: firstly, very few inspections of any kind were carried out during the first three months of the year owing to the extremely severe weather conditions, when it was often difficult for a number of the children to attend school at all; secondly, from the end of the summer term in July until the beginning of November no inspections were carried out, as the County were without a School Medical Officer until the latter date. At present, these examinations are being carried out in the Elementary Schools at first entry to school (i.e. about the age of 5 years), at the age of 10 years prior to the child entering a Secondary School, and again at the age of 14 years before the child is due to leave school altogether.

NUTRITION. The clinical assessment of nutrition is largely an individual expression of opinion. That the general standard amongst the children was satisfactory is shown by subdivision into the customary categories as follows:

A+	Excellent:	30	or 5.1%
A	Good:	526	or 91%
B	Fair:	20	or 3.4%
C	Poor:	3	or 0.5%

These figures compare very closely with those of 1946 although they show a very slight decrease in standard, last year's figures

A+ 5.3%: A 92.4%: B 1.6%: C 0.7%:

The three cases in Group C may be accounted for thus: one child has a congenital heart defect, in the second, the home conditions play a definite part, but the child is also semi-crippled with a congenitally dislocated hip, and in the third case, again I feel

the home conditions are largely to blame, although this child was found to have grossly enlarged and unhealthy tonsils and adenoids.

SCHOOL DINNERS: Mid-day meals are provided in a number of the schools, the proportion of children partaking of them being shown as follows, and the figures from this year being compared with those given for 1946:

<u>School.</u>	<u>No. on books.</u>	<u>Number of meals served.</u>	
		<u>1947.</u>	<u>1946.</u>
Ashwell C.E.	31	26	23
Barrowden C.E.	28	-	-
Belton C.E.	32	-	-
Bisbrocke C.E.	20	-	-
Braunston C.E.	16	-	-
Caldecott C.	18	-	-
Clipsham C.E.	11	-	-
Cottesmore & Burley C.E.	80	45	24
Empingham C.E.	58	44	42
Essendine C.	29	-	-
Exton C.E.	32	10	19
Exton R.C.	32	11	attend C.E. School.
Gt. Casterton C.E.	47	32	40.
Greetham C.E.	30	-	-
Hambleton.	24	-	-
Ketton C.E.	71	49	38
Langham C.E.	49	-	-
Lyddington C.E.	19	-	-
Manton C.E.	17	-	-
Market Overton C.E.	55	30	-
North Luffenham C.E.	42	39	30
Oakham (Mixed) C.E.	101	1	-
Oakham (Infants) C.E.	153	-	-
Preston C.E.	10	-	-
Ridlington C.E.	8	-	-
Ryhall C.E.	57	-	-
Seaton C.E.	10	-	-
South Luffenham C.E.	26	18	25
Stretton C.E.	19	-	-
Tinwell C.E.	11	-	-
Uppingham C.E.	138	34	25
Morcott Fydeall C.E.	38	-	-
Whissendine C.E.	53	40	42
Wing C.E.	31	31	25
Cottesmore Secondary.	122	73	55
Oakham Secondary.	230	151	124
Uppingham Secondary.	120	106	89
Casterton Secondary.	113	111	92
TOTALS.	1981.	851	728

Free dinners have also been provided in 33 cases, these only being granted if the parents income is below a certain figure.

MILK IN SCHOOLS: The policy of providing, wherever possible, the various grades of designated milks has been adhered to throughout the year. There are a number of schools, however, where it has been necessary to supply either non-designated milk or else National Dried Milk, but every effort will be made to bring these into conformity with the advised scheme, as soon as local conditions will permit. The numbers of children taking milk on October 8th. 1947 are quoted and compared with the figures given for a certain date in last year, namely, October 9th. 1946. (The figures in brackets denote the number of children attending school that day).



<u>SCHOOL.</u>	<u>OCT. 8th. 1947.</u>	<u>OCT. 9th. 1946.</u>
Ashwell C.E.	13 (31)	21 (29)
Barrowden C.E.	24 (28)	21 (24)
Belton C.E.	- (32)	-
Bisbrooke C.E.	20 (20)	13 (13)
Braunston C.E.	- (16)	17 (24)
Caldecott C.	14 (18)	13 (19)
Clipsham C.E.	- (11)	-
Cottesmore C.E.	- (80)	60 (71)
Empingham C.E.	- (58)	-
Essendine C.	- (29)	-
Exton C.E.	- (32)	-
Exton R.C.	- (32)	-
Gt. Casterton C.E.	- (47)	-
Greetham C.E.	30 (30)	-
Hambleton C.E.	11 (24)	18 (21)
Ketton C.E.	- (71)	63 (72)
Langham C.E.	47 (49)	51 (51)
Lyddington C.E.	14 (19)	13 (25)
Manton C.E.	- (17)	-
Market Overton C.E.	44 (55)	49 (56)
North Luffenham C.E.	42 (42)	47 (47)
Oakham C.E. Mixed.	100 (101)	105 (112)
Oakham C.E. Infants.	150 (153)	134 (134)
Preston C.E.	- (10)	-
Ridlington C.E.	4 (8)	10 (10)
Ryhall C.E.	- (57)	-
Seaton C.E.	- (10)	-
South Luffenham C.E.	26 (26)	31 (31)
Stretton C.E.	- (19)	-
Tinwell C.E.	10 (11)	12 (12)
Uppingham C.E.	- (138)	137 (137)
Whissendine C.E.	53 (53)	50 (51)
Wing C.E.	- (31)	-
Morcott Fydeall C.E.	23 (38)	30 (31)
Cottesmore Secondary.	- (122)	45 (103)
Oakham Secondary.	90 (230)	175 (243)
Uppingham Secondary.	- (120)	60 (95)
Casterton Secondary.	- (113)	-

i.e. 715 out of 1981. or 36%.

N.B. The figure for 1947 was taken during that period in which there was a very great shortage of milk in this county. Consequently, some schools which in a normal season take school milk were not supplied.

Of the above schools 10 are having dried milk.

Ashwell C.E.	Lyddington C.E.
Barrowden C.E.	North Luffenham C.E.
Bisbrooke C.E.	Ridlington C.E.
Caldecott C.	South Luffenham C.E.
Hambleton C.E.	Morcott Fydeall C.E.

Thus it may be realised that there are still a number of schools in which no type of milk is supplied at all, but it is hoped that this may be remedied at the earliest possible opportunity.

SCHOOL HYGIENE: It is a regrettable fact that the standard of sanitary arrangements in the rural schools falls, in almost all cases, far short of the modern requirements. It seems, however, as if these conditions will have to remain for some time to come still, until building permits become more available. In the meantime, every endeavour is made to secure suitable cleaners in order to maintain as high a standard of cleanliness as possible.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR: In the majority of cases, these have been in reasonably good condition, but there are a certain number of children in the county who have been sent to school in a bad, or even appalling, state. In a few instances, it was necessary to refer the parents to the N.S.P.C.C., when an improvement was seen on the whole. In other cases of real poverty, or of ill-health of the mother, our School Nurse has done invaluable work in collecting parcels of clothing and distributing them to the children most in need of them.

CLEANLINESS. 1648 children were examined by Nurse Neal during the course of the year. Most of the children seen were clean, but as usual, certain families were noted as being persistently dirty.

Were found to be infested with vermin,

MINOR AILMENTS: During the year, 139 minor ailments were treated by the school Nurse. These included:

scabies: 5 cases.  
impetigo: 51.  
minor ear defects: 29  
eye disease: 1  
ringworm: -  
cuts, bruises, minor injuries, etc: 53.

#### OPERATION CASES:

1. Enlarged Tonsils and Adenoids: 57 cases were recommended for operation during the year, whilst 37 required observation only. Altogether 86 children underwent operation, (48 in Oakham Hospital, and 38 in Stamford Infirmary), these including a number of cases left over from past years.
2. Circumcision: 2 cases Stamford Infirmary.  
1 " Oakham Hospital.
3. Hernia: 2 cases Stamford Infirmary.  
1 " Oakham Hospital.
4. Undescended testicles: 2 cases Oakham Hospital.  
Besides these, two boys are undergoing a course of hormone therapy, and 21 more are being kept under observation. In the majority of these cases, the defect will probably right itself; but if it has not done so by the age of 10 years, some form of treatment should be instigated.
5. Eye cases: 2 children were admitted into the Ophthalmic wards of Northampton General Hospital under Mr. Humfrey.  
1 case for correction of squint.  
1 case for removal of septic lachrymal sacs.

#### OTHER DEFECTS:

1. Hypospadias: 2 cases were seen at routine inspections. Both of these were of first degree only, and it is unlikely that operation will be performed.
2. Congenital naevoid condition of one foot: This was discovered in one child, a girl of 14 years, in whom it has produced a swelling over the dorsum of the foot, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ". It causes her little, if any, discomfort, but is naturally a problem where shoes are concerned. She has been referred to the Surgeon at Stamford Infirmary, who, at first, strapped the foot in the hopes of producing clotting in some of the vessels. This met with no success, however, and he is now anxious for the child to undergo operation. He advises removal by dissection of the mass.
3. 2 cases have been receiving remedial treatment at Stamford Infirmary: one child, with scoliosis and kyphosis, has a very poor chest expansion, and is an asthmatic as well; the second child had a course of massage and exercises following a fractured elbow.



ORTHOPAEDIC CASES: As is to be expected, by far the most common orthopaedic defect, and, indeed, of all defects noted amongst school children, is flat foot. At routine inspections, 138 cases were found with flat foot of fairly severe degree, whilst 36 other children showed this to a very slight extent. Of the 138 cases requiring treatment, only the extreme cases were referred to the Manfield Orthopaedic Clinic at Peterborough, the others being issued with printed forms of recommended exercises, which they were urged to attempt with strict regularity. Since there can obviously be no check on the performance of these exercises in the homes, it would seem a wise move to introduce them as a regular daily feature of the physical exercises in the schools; but there are certain drawbacks to this suggestion. Firstly, the exercises should be carried out in bare feet, but this is impossible in the majority of the rural schools, where drill takes place outside in the playground. This latter difficulty might be overcome to a certain extent if each child possessed gym shoes, but this, unfortunately, is far from being the case, and, at present, such supplies as are issued to the schools remains very small.

In all, 46 cases received treatment at Manfield Orthopaedic Clinic during 1947, and 5 of these were discharged. The cases attending the clinic included 1 case of spinal curvature. 2 children with old Perthe's disease, and one child with a congenital dislocated hip. It has been suggested that this child should be admitted for a Shelf operation, but up to date, it has not been possible to obtain the parents' consent.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: There has been no serious outbreak of infection during the year, although there have been cases of almost all the common infections. In no case was closure of the school necessary. There was one isolated case of anterior poliomyelitis at Cottesmore early in November, and the children attending this school were subsequently examined and kept under observation for a period. It is most fortunate that the child concerned made an excellent recovery, and there is now very little residual weakness.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN: The detection and treatment of these cases plays one of the most important parts in the work of the School Medical Service. It is still a most unfortunate fact that there is such an acute shortage of places in special schools of all kinds, and children have to be kept for such a long time on waiting lists, or perhaps even denied admission. Naturally the education of these children is bound to suffer, for they continue to attend ordinary schools where conditions cannot possibly be adapted to their needs. In particular, we may quote the "educationally subnormal" children, many of whom either do not attend school at all, or else are left to drift aimlessly in the elementary schools, with the result that there is an even further dropping behind in their educational achievements. Search continues to be made for the provision for such cases in our care, but in a county as small as this, it is not possible to provide any form of establishment, school or class, and the search, of necessity, must be made further afield. Our numbers of handicapped children are as follows:

Blind. (totally): nil.

Partially sighted: 7.

2 cases with loss of one eye due to injury are attending ordinary schools; one has already been provided with a glass eye, and the other child is waiting for a fitting.

1 child with congenital cataract. She has had an operation (needling) at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge.

1 child has already had an operation for squint, but she still sees very little. She is awaiting admission into a School for the Blind.

1 case is already in residence at Leicester Stoneleigh School for the Blind.

1 child became partially blind as the result of whooping-cough.

1 child has had defective vision since birth, and the question of a special school is being considered.



Deaf children: Nil.

Partially deaf: 1.

this child attends a secondary school, and hears fairly well if sitting right in the front of the room.

Diabetic: Nil.

Epileptic: 2 cases in special schools.

1 case attending a secondary school, (also M.D.)

1 case under observation.

Educationally subnormal: 35

all except one of these cases are attending primary or secondary schools. 1 boy was excluded on account of violent and uncontrollable temper.

4 cases were considered suitable for special schools, and but in 2 of these the parents have refused their consent.

Maladjusted: 1.

this child has been sent away to relations for a time, but will be seen again on his return.

Physical Handicapped: 4.

2 boys with Perthe's Disease, were discharged from Manfield Orthopaedic Hospital last year, and are both attending ordinary schools again.

1 girl with congenital dislocation of the hip has been advised to undergo a Shelf operation.

1 boy with a spina bifida is now attending a Grammar School.

Children with speech defects: 6.

4 of these are of slight degree only.

2 cases were recommended to have a course of Speech Therapy.

Delicate children: 4.

2 children with asthma and poor nutrition are in residence at St. John's Open-air School, Woodford Bridge, Essex, from where satisfactory reports have been received.

1 girl with congenital heart disease.

1 girl with congenital dislocation of the hip. (see above), and very poor nutrition.

WORK OF THE SCHOOL NURSE: A special debt of gratitude is due to Nurse Neal, who, day in, day out, in all weathers and conditions, goes about the County on her innumerable errands. She has worked untiringly in spite of attacks of sever pain due to arthritis, and few people are probably truly aware of the immense amount of good she has performed amongst our school children. She has attended to the treatment of all minor ailments, inspected the cleanliness of the children, assisted the Medical Officer in all Routine Inspections, and from there followed up cases in which treatment was advocated, in order to encourage, and if necessary, assist parents to obtain the proper attention for their children. Her personal approach in these cases has often been of immense value, where the parents had seemed indifferent towards, or had refused, the treatment offered. Moreover, Nurse Neal has spent much time in taking children to Hospital, Orthopaedic clinics, and so on.

VISUAL DEFECTS: Mr. S.H.G. Humfrey, of Northampton, has sent me the following returns:

Number of cases referred for treatment:	62.
" " " actually treated:	54.
" " " for whom spectacles were prescribed:	48

DENTAL INSPECTIONS AND TREATMENT: Mr. MacTaggart has continued to act as School Dentist for the year 1947, and his returns are as follows:

Number of children inspected:	520.
" Found to require treatment.	300.
" actually treated.	238.
Half-days devoted to inspection.	24.
" " " " treatment.	53.
Fillings: permanent teeth.	61.
temporary teeth.	5.
Extractions: permanent teeth.	22.
temporary teeth.	329.
Other operations: Permanent teeth. -	
temporary teeth.	1.

S. M. GODFREY.

